

Church, State and Sex

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EDITOR'S NOTE

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HUMAN RELATIONS today are beset with all sorts of intricate theories. Many great scientists and philosophers have investigated human behavior and conduct and have proposed the most drastic changes in our social relations. Institutions which have been part of the very structure of civilization for centuries have been attacked as wholly erroneous, and we are daily being presented with new fads and strange palliatives as remedies for real or imagined ills of our present-day civilization. So prevalent has been the showering of ideas for our social relations that they have carried with them numerous offshoots from what has given to life its potential backbone. And in the speculative realm scientists and philosophers have dabbled in numerous schemes and perhaps more than all in that which concerns the social relations of mankind.

Right now, in bad times, the scientists and philosophers have been seriously occupied with economic relations; but whether times are good or bad, there is never lack of discussion of the social conduct of mankind and more especially of the sex conduct. The trend has been to attack the whole institution of Christian marriage and to substitute for it various forms of union with broader liberties and a decrease of those responsibilities which have for centuries and in practically all civilizations been lifelong.

As a statesman, it is fitting that I should inquire into the probable effects of some of the new departures from long-established custom. I first would view them from the standpoint of their influence of the state. There are those who say that the individual comes before the state and that governments are established to serve the individual. But whether it is the gov-

ernment that serves the individual or the individual that serves the government is an idle question, as the two are so profoundly interwoven in common interests that service to one ends up by being service to the other. In other words, we would be chasing the question in an endless circle about a bush if we should ever undertake to fix absolutely whether the one or the other is the aim of the nation.

And so, in dealing with the question of the relation between the sexes, whatever policy would result in national good would also result in good to the individual. Conversely, what would be a sound benefit to the individual would also eventually achieve a benefit for the nation. Therefore, in the examination of the problem of the proper relation between the sexes, it is almost quite safe to say that if we were to take care of the interests of the state, we would, in the long run, take care also of the interests of the individual.

Life is continuous and must go on. It must also be so with a nation if that nation is to endure and have a heritage. As life is transmitted from the father and mother to the child, so the nation must transmit its being if it is to live. Nations beget nations as well as human beings. To appreciate this fact we have but to examine the vast new empires come from the loins of mother nations and nurtured and cradled by them, later to assume the form of sovereign states and to take their places in the concourse of nations as complete entities attaining their full national stature.

The nation has the responsibility of handing on to posterity that which it has achieved and especially those civilizing attributes which have made eternal some of the nations of antiquity and even many others up until modern times. In the same way the individual has a like responsibility of transmitting the sum total of life reached during his lifetime. What progress the individual may see in a lifetime may be infinitesimal compared with the ages which mankind has lived, but progress there is, and it is for the individual to hand on what he has compassed to his posterity.

Individual Responsibility

The responsibility of both the individual and the state is therefore very forcibly brought home to us and the interdependence of the one upon the other is notably self-evident. Our people, then, must be indeed alive to the necessity of national continuation and national expansion. If the state is to be great and to remain great, it must have a strong and virile people ready to face the responsibilities incumbent upon them for the preservation of the race.

This is a day when men and women preach the shirking of the duty of begetting sons and daughters. Strength is not built on the apathy of the sluggard, and national strength is not achieved in a life of listless ease. No nation is destined to leave its mark on civilization if it fails to step forth and take up the duty of a great nation not alone by living, but by living to strengthen and expand through the utilization of all its attributes, until its whole spirit is handed on in an unending stream from generation to generation with progressive force and virility. Those nations which have failed to strengthen and expand have passed away and are forgotten, while those which took up the burden with virile zeal and expanded are today the great models of all time.

There is therefore need, above all, for a well ordered family life. This is still the basis of the state and will continue to be the basis of the state for all time. In it we find not alone the nucleus for the units of the nation, but also the crystallizing point of all the cherished human emotions and passions. Any influence which tends to impair its integrity tends also to impair the power of the state.

The nation must have a sense of family integrity. We all know too well the arguments in support of family disintegration, but beyond the immediate selfish interests of wife and husband there are the superior interests of the offspring and their raising to the full height of their capabilities beyond the state of infancy. He who evades the duty upon him to create a

family evades a responsibility akin to that which calls him to the colors in time of national danger. It is a twofold duty, imposed not alone by God and the nation but also by the call of life itself.

Nature's Mandate

We who have been endowed with life are endowed with a power to carry on life and "to seek it more abundantly." We are here to receive it, live it, and pass it on. This is nature's own mandate upon us, and for that mandate she has filled us with an ever-present urge to beget children. What manner of woman is she who within herself desires to evade the duty of having children? We all know well how it is the culmination of a good woman's greatest and dearest desire to bear the child she can love and cherish and bring to capable manhood. It is as true today as in the centuries of antiquity that, blessed with a large family, she can proudly gather them about her and say with that dutiful Roman mother, "These are my jewels."

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The great though long untenable opposition to the large family has been based on economic considerations. It is contended that it is much better to have few children and educate them right than to have many and be forced to deprive them of the advantages they would have had if the economic condition of the family had been less meager.

The cry of national poverty is not new; and it has already been proclaimed as certain to outgrow and outdistance the increase in the population. Malthus over a century ago calculated that the population was bound to increase faster than the food supply, but if any theory has been exploded, that theory has been completely disintegrated and annulled, for even the workman enjoys today, in all the world, far greater economic advantages than he ever dreamed of a century ago.

The cry of "bringing up a few children in the right way" sounds pleasant and beautiful, but it is neither sound nor praiseworthy.

It denies a fundamental requirement of

character in that within a large family the give-and-take of life is more profoundly embedded into the child's character than in a household where he is coddled by the excessive love bestowed on an only boy or girl by the foolish filial extravagance of a fond parent.

The friction and conflict among brothers and sisters steel the child for the greater battle which awaits him in the greater world of his future career.

Returning to the economic plea for a small family, this cry is constantly recurrent. Let us remember that it is the selfsame cry that was heard a century ago, and yet practically every country has doubled its population within the last half century and some have tripled the number of their inhabitants. Even more compelling is the fact that the standard of life, instead of becoming lower as population increased, has become higher—and even to the point at which it may be said that the workman of today enjoys luxuries that were enjoyed only by the nobles of a century ago.

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Again we must not be completely overcome by the trend of some modern thinking—that in the marriage relation there is merely a thankless duty.

There are joys and contentment which family alone can give, and, beyond it all, there is the inherent pride in offspring which remains alive in all those who have achieved true maturity.

If we permit this life to pass from us without having tried to continue the eternal flame, our lives will have been lived in vain, for with both individual and nation, and even above all, there is that great and fundamental purpose running through all life—namely, that it shall hold on forever, clinging and grasping for eternity through myriad generations, and unbroken until the unending infinite.

When we think of careers and the glories of the world, we must realize that we should achieve them in vain did we fail to pass on to another generation the thread of life which was intrusted to us in our entry into this life.